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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/820,617

04/08/2004

Sam Jackson Kelley

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41804 7590 02/12/2007  
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DALLAS, TX 75206

EXAMINER

CHIU, RALEIGH W

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3711

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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3 MONTHS

02/12/2007

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/820,617

Applicant(s)

KELLEY ET AL.

Examiner

Raleigh Chiu

Art Unit

3711

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 December 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 7-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
2. Claims 1-5 and 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walenta.

Regarding claims 1, 3 and 5, Figure 1 of Walenta shows a playing surface A. Pins H correspond to the recited marker. Outer pillars E (point values 10,15,25) correspond to the recited outer scoring area. Inner pillar E (point value 100) corresponds to the recited inner scoring area. Pins F correspond to the recited game pole. Balls G are inherently capable of being place on top of the game pole as well as inherently capable of being pitched or bowled at the pillars.

Regarding the added limitation of "the playing surface suitable for supporting one or more players of the game standing on the playing surface", Walenta explicitly discloses that his game consists of a flat table. See page 1, lines 9-11. As such, a table is considered to be inherently capable of supporting a standing player. Although Walenta does not disclose having his player stand on the table, such a limitation is further considered to be a rule of playing a game and such a

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rule does not define any structure and accordingly cannot serve to distinguish the claim, which is not a process claim, from the Walenta reference. As only structural language is determinative of the meter and bounds of a patent claim and the Walenta table is considered to be capable of supporting a standing player.

Regarding the added limitation of a marker "behind which a player pitches or bowls a game ball", the Walenta markers H are placed on the table to inherently allow a player to stand behind them to pitch or bowl a game ball. The fact that Walenta does not use pitched or bowled balls is irrelevant to the claimed invention. As similarly set forth above, such a limitation is directed solely to the rules of playing a game and does not define any structure and accordingly cannot serve to distinguish the claim, which is not a process claim, from the Walenta reference. Only the structural language is determinative of the meter and bounds of a patent claim and the Walenta markers are situated on the table such that a player can stand behind them.

Regarding the added limitation of "an inner scoring area having a perimeter in which a ball may come to rest", although Walenta only shows one inner pillar, discovering an optimum value of a result effective variable has been held to be within the capabilities of the person of ordinary skill in the art. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in

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this art, by routine experimentation, to provide the game with any number of scoring targets in any arrangement in order to increase the opportunity for scoring. It is further noted that the inclusion of additional inner pillars arranged in a manner similar to the outer pillars would naturally define a perimeter within which a ball is inherently capable of coming to rest.

Regarding claims 2 and 10, the use of scoreboards with games involving points is old and well-known in the art.

Regarding claims 4, 8 and 9, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use differently colored balls based on their point value.

Regarding claim 7, It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify the Walenta reference by having differently colored poles in order to further differentiate the point values associated with each pole.

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

3. Claim 6 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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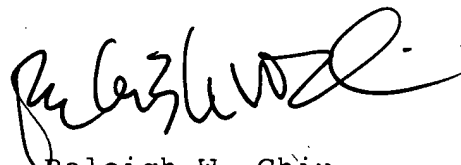
**Conclusion**

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Raleigh Chiu whose telephone number is (571) 272-4408. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eugene Kim, can be reached on (571) 272-4463.

The fax number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Raleigh W. Chiu  
Primary Examiner  
Technology Center 3700

RWC:dei:feif  
18 January 2007